

## DISTRESS (IRELAND).

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,  
dated 27 April 1883;—for,

COPIES "of a REPORT from the Local Government Board for *Ireland*, dated the 25th day of April 1883, with regard to DISTRESS existing or apprehended in certain Parts of *Ireland*."

"Of the REPORTS from Inspectors of the Local Government Board ;"

"And, RETURN as to IN-DOOR and OUT-DOOR RELIEF enclosed therewith."

REPORT from the Local Government Board for Ireland, with regard to the Distress existing or apprehended in certain Parts of Ireland.

(No. 14,335—1883.)

Local Government Board, Dublin,

Sir,

25 April 1883.

IN accordance with the request contained in your Minute of the 19th instant, the Local Government Board for Ireland have the honour to submit to the Lord Lieutenant copies of Reports which they have received from their Inspectors in charge of unions in Connaught, and in the counties of Donegal, Clare, Kerry, and the West Riding of Cork, on the subject of the distress existing in that part of Ireland, and the present condition of the poor.

*Distress*.—The Local Government Board are glad to observe from the information thus obtained, that distress is decreasing throughout the districts referred to, and that the Inspectors are in a position to speak more favourably than before of the circumstances of the poorer classes, and their means of support.

Dr. Woodhouse, who has charge of unions in the west of Donegal, states that the physical condition of the people does not betray any evidence of insufficient food, and that their clothing as a rule is good. Mr. MacFarlane, writing from the same county, says that there appears to be remunerative employment for men, women, and children, where their services can be spared from their own patches of land. Mr. Power, whose district is principally comprised in Sligo, Roscommon, and Leitrim, reports that distress exists in certain unions, and that in some localities it may be more than usual since the year 1879, but that he is not aware that it is of such a character that it may not be met by the ordinary machinery of the poor law. Mr. Robinson, whose unions are situated in the poorest parts of Mayo and Galway, adverts to the chronic poverty which exists in part of Mayo, but states that the pressure for relief has been lessened by the emigration of a large number of destitute families, and that it is satisfactory to observe that in all parts of his district the people have found the means of cropping their land. Dr. Roughton, who has charge of unions in the County Galway, says that distress of a widespread nature does not exist in his district, though there is no doubt some poverty among certain classes that always are in a needy condition. Major Bushe Fox, who is stationed in the County Clare, reports that distress is everywhere decreasing in his district; that there is no pressure in his unions; that the numbers in the workhouses, and on the out-door relief lists are reduced, and that there is a general and continued demand for labour at remunerative prices. Mr. Richard Bourke, speaking of other unions in the same county, states that the poor therein have been exposed to no special suffering this winter; that there was perhaps rather less employment for

labouring men during the three months ending in February than in other years owing to the unusual rainfall, but that since then the demand for labour has been, if anything, above the average, and continues plentiful at the present time at the ordinary rate of wages. The report of Major Spaight, respecting Kerry, and part of the West Riding of Cork, is the most unfavourable the Local Government Board have received, and he speaks of a considerable amount of poverty and privation, principally caused by the unusual want of employment; but Dr. Brodie, who has charge of the adjoining district, which comprises some of the unions in West Cork, says that little exceptional distress prevails except along the sea-board and other portions of the Clonakilty Union, and in the remote western parts of the Macroom Union, where a scarcity of food may be found amongst the poor; but he adds, that this appears to be the normal condition these two or three years.

The Local Government Board annex, for the information of his Excellency, a return showing the numbers relieved in the unions referred to at the close of each of the six weeks ended the 14th instant, and it is satisfactory to observe that there has been a gradual decrease since the 17th ultimo; there has been during that period a reduction of 435 in the workhouse inmates, and of 124 among those in receipt of out-door relief, and there is now vacant accommodation in the workhouses of the Unions in the districts mentioned, for over 15,500 persons.

*Sickness.*—There appears to be at present very little sickness in the distressed districts.

Dr. Woodhouse reports with reference to Dunfanaghy and Glenties Unions, that he knows of no fever in either of the unions, except scarlatina, which attacked two families, causing in one of them three deaths. Happily, he states, during the past four weeks, no fresh case of this malady has occurred. In some places there has been whooping-cough (mild) and severe cases of pneumonia and bronchitis, but taking into consideration the unusual inclemency of the weather during the first quarter of the year, he thinks that the health of the district is satisfactory, and the rate of mortality is low.

Mr. MacFarlane observes that all the medical reports for the quarter ended 1st April speak most favourably of the healthful condition of the poor, with some very few exceptions of cases of a bronchial nature caused by the damp winter and wet in the early part of the quarter, and which is now all passing away.

Mr. Power states that there are some cases of fever in the Dromore West Union, mostly amongst the children, both typhus and typhoid.

Mr. Robinson reports that fever has made its appearance in some parts of his district, but that the past week shows a marked decrease in the number of cases under treatment. He observes that the disease is believed to be engendered by the unsanitary state of the people's habitations, but that this is a subject upon which the Board have already obtained skilled medical opinion.

The Local Government Board will continue to pay the necessary attention to the sanitary condition of Dromore West and Swineford Unions, and there are no unfavourable reports in this respect from other unions.

*Emigration.*—The emigration under the Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Act is progressing in a very satisfactory manner. The Local Government Board have already received applications for grants to the amount of about 26,944 £, and of loans to the amount of about 3,105 £, but in many unions the persons desirous to emigrate provide the difference between the Government grant and the cost of emigration, which accounts for the small proportion the loans bear to the grants.

The anxiety of the poor in the west of Ireland to be allowed to take advantage of the aid thus offered to them continues unabated, and the Emigration Committee find it difficult to keep pace with the action of boards of guardians in the selection of emigrants, and in making the necessary arrangements for their embarkation, and for their reception and disposal abroad.

However, to prevent delay in this respect, as far as possible, the members of the Committee have been increased to six, and they are unceasingly engaged in the duties assigned to them.

The beneficial effects of the emigration has already been felt in the counties of

of Mayo and Galway, where Mr. Tuke's Committee have acted in a very prompt, effective, and praiseworthy manner, and have already sent out about 1,500 persons, which, however, is only a small portion of those who have been or will be selected by them.

Mr. Robinson states that the removal of so many destitute people has already caused an immediate relief to the ratepayers, and that he is informed that the emigrants are nearly all of a class who must sooner or later have been supported by the poor rates, as they are overwhelmed with debt, and without food or means of procuring it for the spring months. Mr. Robinson adds that in Belmullet Union the cost of relieving in the workhouse for one year the persons who have been passed for emigration, and who allege themselves to be almost destitute, would be about 24*s.* to the pound on the valuation of the union.

The Local Government Board think it probable that when the spring work is over there may be want of employment in parts of the west of Ireland, and exceptional poverty in certain localities, but the reports which they have now received confirm them in the opinion which they expressed to his Excellency in their letter of the 13th ultimo, to the effect that the administration of the relief which may be afforded under the poor law will be found sufficient to cope with any distress which may prevail.

I have, &c.

(signed) *W. D. Wodsworth,*

The Under Secretary, the Castle, Dublin.

Secretary.

REPORT from Dr. *Stewart Woodhouse* :—District comprising the Unions of *Glenties, Dunfanaghy, and Donegal.*

(No. 14,966—83—Miscellaneous.)

Gentlemen,

Glenties, 23 April 1883.

In reply to your letter, asking for report as to distress existing in the district of which I have temporary charge, I beg to state that of the unions of Donegal, Glenties, and Dunfanaghy, which constitute the western half of this county, the locality in which the poverty of the people is most marked is the large parish of Lower Templemore, commonly known as "the Rosses." There the holdings are the smallest, the soil the worst (most of it being merely rocks and bog), and the population the most over-crowded.

Only a little better is the neighbouring parish of Dungloe. During no season could the bulk of the inhabitants support themselves from the produce of their farms: the men, however, and some of the younger women, earn wages in the adjoining counties or in Scotland during the six summer months; and nearly all the families have members in America who send home generous remittances. Shop debts are paid chiefly in American money.

The electoral division of Glenties, in the parish of Glenties, and parts of the parishes of Kilear and Glencolumbkille, are in a very poor condition; not as poor absolutely as "the Rosses," but more helpless, inasmuch as the people do not leave their holdings to earn wages elsewhere.

These are all situated in the union of Glenties.

In the union of Dunfanaghy parts of the parishes of Falcarragh (Tullaghbegley East) and Gweedore, as well as some mountain townlands in Clondohorky, are poverty-stricken; but here also it is customary for the young adults to seek work as agricultural labourers.

In thus particularizing the above-mentioned localities it is not meant that the other portions of these unions have not suffered through the failure of last year's potato crop, but simply that the chronic poverty has been more aggravated in the places specified.

From some places a few labourers have left earlier than usual this year in order to gain as much as they could by hiring out, but many more will leave for Scotland, &c., about the first of next month. Although content to work as labourers when away from home, there is an unfortunate and extraordinary desire to possess land here, and the prices given for it are out of all proportion to the value; e.g., within the last month a holding, the entire rent of which

was 10 s., was sold by auction for 47 l. 10 s. Another, the entire rent of which was 17 s., was sold for 47 l. Both were in a distressed district. Frequently returned Irish-Americans buy at such prices; but in the two cases mentioned above the purchasers were natives who had not been in America. On the very poorest townland in one of the parishes already particularized for distress, a holding, the rent of which was 17 s. 6 d. a year, was sold for 14 l.

Along the coast fishing has been resumed, but dog-fish materially interfere with its success. Last week an experiment in deep sea fishing, six miles off the Island of Arranmore, was tried under the auspices of a committee of the Society of Friends and Mr. Hammond, of Burton Port; a 90-ton schooner was employed for four days, and evidence of abundance of fish was found; but, with the exception of an immense halibut, nearly all the fish drawn to the surface was mangled or destroyed by dog-fish.

Relief from charitable sources, in the form of meal or money, has been given in the parishes of Glencolumbkille, Gweedore, and Kilcar. In many of the schools throughout the unions of Glenties and Dunfanaghy the children are given bread or biscuits daily.

In nearly all localities the seed difficulty, a most formidable one, has been or is being met. During the past three weeks 243 tons of seed potatoes, a gift from the Society of Friends, have been distributed by them over every parish in these two unions. In addition, subscriptions raised by local committees, or collected by the priests of the parishes, or grants from the Bishop of Raphoe, have brought 900 or 1,000 tons of potatoes into the county. This change of seed will prove a great boon.

The physical condition of the people does not betray any evidence of insufficient food; their clothing, as a rule, is good; much of it, especially that of the older people, being made of homespun wool; and fuel is abundant.

I know of no fever in either of the unions of Dunfanaghy or Glenties except scarlatina, which attacked two families, causing in one of them three deaths. Happily during the past four weeks no fresh case of this malady has occurred. In some places there has been whooping-cough (mild), and severe cases of pneumonia and bronchitis; but taking into consideration the unusual inclemency of the weather during the first quarter of the year, the health of the district is satisfactory, and the rate of mortality low.

The prices of bread-stuffs have considerably fallen within the last six weeks; Indian meal being now only 8 s. per cwt., and flour also being lower; but I anticipate that there will be an increasing strain on charitable aid in the way of supplying food during the coming months.

In the union of Donegal the people are not so well off as they were last year, but their condition compares favourably with that observable in the two other unions.

I have, &c.

The Local Government Board,  
Ireland.

(signed) *Stewart Woodhouse.*

REPORT from Mr. *MacFarlane*:—Part of his District situated in the County of *Donegal*.

(No. 14,961—83—Miscellaneous.)

Sir,

23 April 1883.

In compliance with the request of the Local Government Board, conveyed in your letter of the 19th instant, that I should furnish them with a report as to the distress existing in that part of my district situated in county Donegal, and with such other information as to the general condition of the poor which I may think useful; I beg therefore to report as follows: The development of the potato disease in the month of September, the real effects of the storm of 1st October, and even the exaggerated accounts of its extent, the unusual damp and the continuous wet of the winter, a combination of circumstances especially unfavourable to the mass of small occupiers of the cold, peaty soils, and undrained lands of Donegal, gave me anxious care, and caused an extended concentration of my attention

attention on that portion of my district; but experience and meteorological statistics led me to expect, as well as hope, that when so large a proportion of the annual average rainfall, and so many rainy days had taken place in the winter months, we might reasonably expect a dry spring, so important to all farmers, labourers, and the community at large; that March dust has been wisely compared to gold, as the forerunner of plenty, from good crops, the result of that industrious cultivation of the soil which gives employment to all ages and sexes, and for which dry weather in the spring months is so generally valuable, but especially in Donegal, and such has taken place. Thus the prevalence of continuous good weather for having land tilled, oats sown, and potatoes planted, has not only had its effect in providing abundant employment in the well-cultivated districts of the better class of lands at about 2 s. per day, but elsewhere throughout the county there appears to be remunerative employment\* for men, women, and children, where their services can be spared from their own patches of land; and whether the payment is in money or in kind, or in return services for loan of a horse, or other assistance, there is at present a general appearance of industrious effort to take advantage of the dry weather this year.

The fine weather last year continued only for a short period, and was so early in the spring, that few took advantage of it, but those few had a fair crop of potatoes and little diseased, and the knowledge of this has also given a stimulus to employment. Again, potatoes brought little more than 2½ d. or 3 d. per stone last year, and some were unsold or unused at the end of season, and were thrown out of the pits rotten; now there is a high price, and an unusual extent of land is being planted with potatoes. The large quantity of fresh seed potatoes which have been distributed by "The Society of Friends" (about 300 tons), in addition to what has been provided through other charitable committees, and forwarded the last three weeks by the four gunboats, "Seahorse," "Banterer," "Wasp," and "Amelia," placed at my disposal for that purpose by the Government, will be a valuable acquisition, as I believe a change of seed is of the utmost importance in growing potatoes successfully, independent of the precarious condition of the recipients; for even those who had a certain percentage of a crop would have only had an inferior unripened small potato to plant for seed; but I cannot avoid observing also that there was much difficulty in ascertaining what potatoes were saved in the various parts of Donegal. No doubt in the cold, peaty soils, they were very much affected by disease; but I asked a man who I knew had planted his potatoes in good time last spring in the Glenties Union, to dig a portion of an undug ridge in my presence, and they were a good size; again, I saw potatoes being sent to Derry market from Dunfanaghy, and potatoes at same time being purchased in Derry by a charitable committee, and sent to Dunfanaghy. Again, in Glencolumbkille schoolhouse I spoke to the schoolmaster about the want of ventilation for a crowded school, and observing that the house had a third room which ought to be in use for the boys, I had some difficulty in being allowed to look into it, but I was persistent, and the only objection to its being opened at once for me was its containing a store of potatoes, for seed, I presume; I mention this merely as to the great difficulty of obtaining reliable information about the existing supply of potatoes. However, there is every reason to be glad that so much good seed has been now introduced, and is being planted under such favourable circumstances of good tillage of the land, and at such an early period of the season, potatoes planted any time in this month (of April) being considered to be sufficiently early.

The county of Donegal has such an extensive coast, with its boughs and numerous smaller indentations, and thus presents so much seaboard, that it possesses a large fishing population in some of its poorest parts, and the fishing has now for some time been very fair; and I frequently see the female portion digging their small patches of land, and planting potatoes, while their husbands, or fathers and brothers, are out fishing.

I consider "The Rosses," in the Glenties Union, as the poorest portion of Donegal. It is estimated that about 1,000 men go from that district to work in Scotland each year, earlier or later, as their earnings of the preceding year have run out, say, from the 1st March to the 1st July. They have not much visible property,

\* There is an advertisement posted through Inishowen, offering work in county Antrim, at Ballynure Waterworks, to 250 labourers, to whom 16 s. to 20 s. per week will be given, with free lodgings, and provisions at wholesale prices.

property, but as they can earn about a pound a week, of which they send a portion home, and as so many as might have gone this year in March have not yet left for Scotland, it would appear that it is in expectation of some unusual extra-neous help, or from considerations in reference to the grant for emigration, and making arrangements to sell their holdings, which generally bring from 20 *l.* to 60 *l.*, some still higher, even up to 100 *l.* A great number are now going weekly from different portions of Donegal to Canada and the United States, but almost entirely young men and young women from 18 to 25 years of age. It is reported that 700 went from Derry on the 14th April, and 800 on the 21st April. In reference to emigration, and the general physical appearance of the people and their children, from some of what is termed the poorest districts of the Glenties Union, I was present there, and subsequently at Dungloe and Donegal, as also at Milford, where the candidates for the free grant presented themselves with their children before the emigration committee, and all, about 600, including the children, looked robust in health and well clad. It was observed by Sir R. Jackson and Mr. Redington, when considering the applications for emigration, how little appearance of poverty was exhibited either in dress of adults or children of some 300 or 400 who presented themselves at Dungloe; and as regards medical testimony as to general good health throughout the county, all the medical reports, for the quarter ending 1st April, speak most favourably of the healthful condition of the poor, with some very few exceptions of cases of a bronchial nature, from the damp winter and wet in early part of the quarter, which is now all passing away. As to the children throughout the county Donegal, I can myself speak favourably of their healthy and happy appearance, as I seldom pass a school without paying it a visit when I am not pressed by time; I am constrained to refer to the unwholesome excitement occasionally indulged in by the publication of erroneous statements with regard to seaweed and starvation. No case of death from destitution has been stated, but insinuations are made that such do take place. Thus, lately, the death of a poor woman in Glencolumbkille was attributed to destitution, who, on investigation, I found was not destitute, and died from jaundice, having been attended by the medical officer of the district. Another poor woman was lately drowned at Clonmany, in Inishowen, and there was a short article in the newspaper connecting her death with being obliged to gather seaweed for food, which was not the fact.

I am, &c.

(signed) *H. J. MacFarlane.*

REPORT from Mr. Power:—District comprising the Counties of *Sligo*, *Leitrim*, and *Roscommon*, and portion of the County of *Donegal*.

(No. 15,124—83—Miscellaneous.)

Gentlemen,

*Sligo*, 24 April 1883.

In answer to your letter of the 19th April, I may state that, with regard to certain unions in my district, distress exists, comprised in the counties of *Leitrim*, *Roscommon*, and part of *Mayo*, and in some localities it may be more than usual, since the year 1879; but I am not aware that it is of such a character that it may not be met by the ordinary machinery of the poor law. There are a good many families who possess a few acres of land who get provisional relief from the relieving officers, who are instructed to watch them very closely, from week to week. The workhouses are by no means overcrowded, though there are more in them than last year. There is also distress existing at present amongst those who are about to emigrate, having sold most of their property, so that the sooner they are enabled to go the better. I may also state that there are complaints as to want of seed in some places, but I do not find that it is general. There are some cases of fever in the *Dromore West Union*, mostly amongst the children, both typhus and typhoid.

I am, &c.

(signed) *W. A. Power.*

REPORT from Mr. Robinson:—District comprising the County of Mayo and part of the County of Galway.

(No. 14,959—83—Miscellaneous.)

Gentlemen,

Ballina, 23 April 1883.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 19th instant, I have the honour to submit to you the following report as to the general condition of the poor in my district.

The result of a careful inquiry into the condition of the poorer classes during the early part of the spring, was to lead me to form the conclusion that there would inevitably be a pressure for relief in the sea-bordering unions of my district about this time, which would strain the resources of the poor law to an unusual extent. This, however, has not been the case up to the present, a fact which must be accounted for by the large number of destitute families who have availed themselves of the facilities offered for emigration. Owing to the prompt action of "Mr. Tuke's Committee" in carrying the movement into operation, about 1,500 persons have already been emigrated. Though this number bears a very small proportion to the number that will ultimately be sent, the removal of so many destitute people has caused an immediate relief to the ratepayers of these unions. I am advised by the competent authority of relieving officers, and others, that the emigrants are nearly all of a class who must sooner or later have been supported by the poor rates, as they are overwhelmed with debt and without food, or means of procuring it for the spring months.

To better illustrate the effect of the emigration, I may mention that, taking Belmullet for example, the cost of relieving for one year in the workhouse the persons who have been passed for emigration, and who allege themselves to be almost destitute, would be about 24 s. to the pound on the valuation of the union.

The past fine weather has been everywhere availed of for the completion of the spring work, and it is satisfactory to observe that in all parts of my district the people appear to have found the means of cropping their land.

The fishing promises well along the coast, but the people have been so fully occupied with their farms during the last few weeks that very little time has been devoted to it yet.

In the Swineford Union I have to report the existence of much of that hopeless chronic poverty which is always more or less observable at this period of the year; hopeless I term it, because it seems impossible to suggest any remedial measure of a permanent character which would be effectual in averting constantly recurring distress.

In this union the people are nearly all of the "migratory labourer" class, and when wages are high and labour plentiful in England, they can earn enough to provide for their wants from year to year, but they are so entirely dependent on this that any falling off in the English labour market is acutely felt by them. They are now suffering from the effects of the English agricultural depression of the past few years. It is somewhat early to form an opinion of the prospects and probabilities of the present year, but I have heard rumours to the effect that there is now a feeling against Irish labourers in England, and if this is borne out by fact, the consequence will be a disastrous one to the small cottiers of the Swineford Union. Emigration certainly would be a remedy, and it is one which the people are clamorous for, but the families who are most destitute and most anxious to emigrate, are, in the majority of cases, without the means of supplementing the Government grant, and the Guardians do not consider the finances of the union are such as would justify them in applying the rates for this purpose.

Fever has made its appearance in some parts of my district, but the past week shows a marked decrease in the number of cases under treatment; the disease is believed to be engendered by the unsanitary state of the people's habitations, but I believe this is a subject on which your Board have already obtained skilled medical opinion.

There is very little employment available for the labourers and small occupiers

in the poorer parts of my district at any time, but at present, owing to the large numbers of people leaving the country, the demand for labouring hands is more apparent than it was at the corresponding period last year.

Some charitable organisations are affording relief in certain localities, but I imagine they have command of very limited funds.

The Local Government Board.

I have, &c.  
(signed) H. A. Robinson.

REPORT FROM Dr. ROUGHAN:—District comprising parts of the County of Clare, Galway, Roscommon, and Westmeath.

(No. 14,965—83—Miscellaneous.)

Gentlemen,

Galway, 23 April 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, No. 14,335, directing me to furnish your Board with a report as to the distress existing in my district, and with such other information as to the general condition of the poor which I may think useful.

In reply, I desire to state that distress of a widespread nature does not exist in my district; there is no doubt some poverty among certain classes that always are in a needy condition, such as poor cottiers and small farmers with long families, whose state always depends on uncertain employment and the price of provisions. This year the scarcity of potatoes, and their consequent high price, together with the want of employment, has tended much to aggravate their position, the price of potatoes being about 8 *d.* per stone, and the rate of wages up to the beginning of March being, for labourers, about 1 *s.* per day; when the spring work commenced the wages of labourers ranged from 1 *s.* 6 *d.* to 2 *s.* 6 *d.* per day, and those wages are still given; in a short time turf cutting will commence, and much employment will be given as the tilling of potatoes and the culture of turnips.

There has been a large quantity of potatoes sown this year, and being put into well-prepared ground at an early season, it is hoped they will come to maturity before the inclement weather sets in in the latter part of summer.

I am able to give a satisfactory account, comparatively speaking, of all the unions in my district, except Glennamaddy. I believe there is at present much distress in portions of that union, and it is probable that during the summer months an increased demand will be made on the poor rates; the price of provisions is very high, and there is not as much potatoes sown as in former years, owing, I am informed, to a scarcity of seed potatoes; not much employment is given, the wages not more than 10 *d.* per day. In most parts of my district a large quantity of green land has been broken up and planted with potatoes.

1. Mount Bellew Union is in a very satisfactory state; there is scarcely a word of distress since the postponement of the seed rate was refused; there is some scarcity of potatoes, which now reach 7 *d.* per stone. Cattle bring a very high price, of which the small farmer gets the benefit; the potatoes were sown this year in good time; last year they were planted late, and as a consequence did not come to maturity, and were not able to resist the injurious rains we had last summer. This year a very large quantity of old pasture was turned up and planted with potatoes.

2. Portumna Union is in a favourable condition. Labourers have wages at from 2 *s.* to 2 *s.* 6 *d.*, according to the work they are employed at.

3. Athlone Union is not in a distressed state; there are some cases of want in the Roscommon part of the union, but I think the present poor law machinery will be able to cope with it.

4. Glennamaddy Union is not in a prosperous condition, and as I before mentioned, it is probable there will be some pressure on the rates.

5. Loughrea is in a fairly satisfactory condition, and I think there need be no apprehension about it.

6. Ballyvaughan.



6. Ballyvaughan. This union being under the temporary charge of Major Bushe-Fox, I am unable to afford any information from personal knowledge, but I am informed from reliable sources that there is much distress in the electoral divisions of Derreen, Ahkey Drumcreehy, and Gleninagh, and that as a rule they are not planting potatoes in the quantities they did the past two years, owing to the fact of their not having seed potatoes. Dr. McEvilly, s.c., Bishop of Tuam, sent some seed potatoes, but in small quantities, varying from four to six stone. The rate of wages paid is 1 s. 6 d. per day.

Corrofin Union.—This union has been also under the charge of Major Bushe-Fox, and I am informed that the distress prevailing does not appear to be much in excess of that of previous years, except in some commonages, viz. :—

Ruan and Ruan commonage.	
Kilnaboy	"
Moyrbee	"

and even in those localities it has not been very considerable. Since the spring farming set in, potato planting, though not so extensive as last year, has been carried on under more favourable circumstances; there are, I am informed, several small landholders, and persons who usually sowed in conacre, cannot do so this year, not having potatoes for seed; the rate of wages is, in Corrofin village, 1 s. 6 d. per day, and diet, and in the country parts of the union it is 1 s. per diem, and two meals.

Galway Union does not differ as to the condition of the people from former years. In the western portion there is, as usual, much want and distress. I think the same quantity of ground has been planted with potatoes as in former years, and the general crop has been put down earlier than usual, so that it is to be hoped that it will come to maturity before the cold and wet weather sets in.

I have, &c,  
(signed) Geo. F. Rougheu.

REPORT from Major Bushe-Fox :—District comprising part of the  
County Clare.

(No. 15,121—83.—Miscellaneous.)

Gentlemen,

Banis, County Clare, 23 April 1883.

In reference to your letter of the 19th instant, requesting me to furnish a Report as to the state of the poor in my district, I have the honour to inform you that distress is everywhere decreasing. There is no pressure on the unions in the district; the numbers in the workhouses and on the out-door relief lists are reduced; there is a general and continued demand for labour at remunerative wages; spring work is being vigorously carried on, and already a large area has been planted under potatoes, ample supplies of which are selling freely in the local markets at from 7 d. to 9 d. per stone, even in those districts where distress at present chiefly prevails, namely, in the towns (especially in Miltown Malbay), and in parts of the Banistymon and Ballyvaughan unions the condition of the poor has been considerably ameliorated by the great demand for labour, for I may say that there is employment at present for every able-bodied person throughout my district.

As regards the future, I see no cause to feel anxiety with respect to the population along the sea coast. They suffered severely during the winter, but from henceforth they will find remunerative employment in fishing, sea-weed gathering, and the manufacture of kelp; and everywhere the prospects of the poorer classes for the remainder of the year are rendered more hopeful in consequence of the exceptionally favourable weather they have had for putting down their crops during the last six weeks.

But as the potato planting progresses it becomes apparent that considerable numbers of small farmers and labourers are unable to plant the same amount of potatoes as in former years, owing to their not having sufficient quantities of seed themselves, and being unable to procure it at the present high prices.

I would further beg to observe that though employment is now general, it will cease to be general in some localities with the spring work, and the poorer classes then will find it very difficult to obtain employment during the summer months. As far as I can ascertain there are few, if any, public or reproductive works going on in any part of my district, and the distressed classes receive at present but very little aid from charitable sources, and are not in the habit of emigrating to England or Scotland for employment.

In five electoral divisions in the Ennis Union, and three electoral divisions in the Ballyvaughan Union, which have been scheduled under the Emigration Clauses of the Arrears Act, distress will be relieved by emigration, but there will still remain throughout this district many small occupiers and labourers who will have to face the summer months without employment, and with very limited, if any, resources.

Under these circumstances I trust the report which has been extensively circulated that the West Clare Railway is about to be commenced, may prove correct. This work, while it lasted, would do much to dispose of distress in the unions of Ennis, Corrofin, and Ennistymon, through which it is to run, and would most probably afford considerable relief to the poor in the more distant unions of Killadyserf, Kilrush, and Ballyvaughan, many of whom would be likely to settle down along the line for the purpose of obtaining employment there while the works were in progress.

I have, &c.  
(signed) L. Loftus Bushe-Fox.

REPORT from Mr. Bourke:—Part of his District situated in the County of Clare.

(No. 15,092—83.—Miscellaneous.)

Gentlemen,

36, Elgin-road, Dublin, 23 April 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th, requesting me to furnish a Report as to the distress existing in that part of my district situated in the County Clare, with such other information as to the general condition of the poor as may appear to me desirable.

In reference to this subject it may be right for me to explain that, owing to my employment here for the last six months as representative of the Treasury in connection with the Arrears of Rent Act, the immediate supervision of all my Clare unions, except Seariff and Tulla, has been entrusted to Major L. Bushe-Fox, who will, no doubt, submit his Report upon their condition; and, under these circumstances, my remarks will be more especially confined to those two unions.

*The Labouring Classes.*—In them, I am happy to say, the poor have been exposed to no special suffering this winter. There was, perhaps, rather less employment for labouring men during the three months ending in February than in other years, owing to the unusual rainfall. But since then the demand for labour has been, if anything, above the average, and continues plentiful up to the present time at the ordinary rate of wages. Some articles of provisions, such as potatoes and Indian meal, were dearer this winter than in former years, but flour and bread did not advance in price, and the wages of the working man went as far as usual in supporting his family.

I think I observe less desire on part of this class than heretofore to make provision for themselves by planting potatoes on what is called oonnacre or moek ground, that is, ground specially taken for the purpose of a year's crop. The prices offered for such land this year appear to me less than usual, showing a diminished demand.

*Relief from the Rates.*—There has been no increase in the extent of relief afforded in these unions, and the inmates of the workhouse have continued, with

## DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

11

with very little fluctuation, the same as last year. The following table shows the extent of relief given at the close of the week ending the 14th instant :—

Unions.	Population in 1881.	Relief.		Percentage.
		Workhouse.	Out-door.	
Tulla . . . . .	13,801	214	8	1.7
Scariff . . . . .	13,884	126	80	1.0

*Small Farmers.*—The class immediately above the labourers, comprising those holding very small farms, on the produce of which they maintain themselves, with the help of occasional earnings by some members of the family, is even poorer this year than usual, owing to the scantiness of last year's crops, and it is difficult to imagine how the occupiers can continue to hold the land. They are, however, as a rule, making strenuous efforts to crop it, but the price of seed potatoes must be beyond the reach of most of them, and it is to be feared the quantity grown will fall short of the average, and be deficient in quality for want of some change in the seed.

*Farmers generally.*—The circumstances of the better class of farmers holding larger quantities of land ought to be improving with the advanced prices for stock of all kinds, and butter, and in the case of industrious and prudent men of this class, this is certainly the case. But the recent period of agitation and excitement has tended to impoverish most of them, and leave them still loaded with the debts contracted during the unfavourable years that have previously occurred.

*Emigration.*—There appears to be a considerable amount of emigration proceeding in these unions, especially Scariff, and throughout all the district with which I am concerned. It is carried on chiefly by remittances from friends abroad, and is assisted by small grants from the Guardians in aid of outfit, and expenses. Many of the emigrants are single young men and women, but not unfrequently whole families are thus leaving, helped by friends abroad, or by some member who has preceded them.

From the union of Limerick about a hundred young girls have recently been taken by a manufacturing firm in one of the American States under articles of agreement, ensuring them a definite term of employment. In this case, also, the Guardians assisted in procuring the girls' outfit.

The union of Glin is the only one under my immediate present superintendence, where emigration is in progress under the Arrears Act. The poor there have shown great anxiety to avail themselves of the opportunity of leaving the country, but the arrangements for selections and transport of these intending emigrants are not yet completed.

The Local Government Board.

I have, &c.  
(signed) R. Bourke.

REPORT from Major *Spaight*:—District comprising the County of *Kerry*, and part of the County of *Cork*.

(No. 14,782.—1883.—Miscellaneous.)

Gentlemen,

Pantry, 22 April 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, in which you request me to report on the distress and general condition of the people in my district, for the information of the Chief Secretary.

You are aware that I have been but a short time in charge of the district, but in that time I have endeavoured as far as possible to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the condition of the people in the different parts of it.

There is a very considerable amount of poverty and privation, principally caused by the unusual absence of employment this year in nearly every part of the district, but this is observable to a greater extent in the unions of Kenmare, Caherciveen, Killarney, and Tralee.

The gentlemen, landlords, &c., who interested themselves in the country and gave employment, have been driven out of it by the late agitation and consequent lawlessness of the people; everywhere there is the same dearth of employment, and from the same cause. The farmers will give none that they can avoid, endeavouring to do their work with their own families, and the assistance of servant boys who live in the house. The time at which this want is most felt by the labouring classes is during the months of May, June, and July, and about Christmas.

The holdings in the poorer districts are nearly all sub-divided, until they have become too small to support a family; the land is very poor; they have no good manure, and no means of making it, so that in the event of any failure in their crops, and in the absence of employment, they are entirely without resources. This is their normal state, but it is much aggravated this year by those who usually give employment being either rendered unable to do so by non-payment of rent, or driven out of the country.

Some remedy might have been found for this state of things in emigration, but the farmers and others interested in keeping cheap labour at their doors (when required) have refused to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded by the Emigration Clauses of the Arrears Act, and the consequence is that in these districts numbers of the young and active of both sexes are making every effort (through the assistance of friends in America and otherwise) to leave the country, and are leaving the old and helpless behind them.

In the Killarney Union alone last week there were 1,068 of this class in receipt of out-door relief, at a weekly cost of 73 *l.* 1 *s.*; and in Tralee 671, at a cost of 38 *l.* 12 *s.* 6 *d.*

This causes the rates to become a heavy burden upon all, and hangs like a millstone round the necks of those who are themselves little above the financial condition of paupers.

There has been and is a great want of good seed potatoes; the poorer people have great difficulty in saving sufficient quantities for seed, and put by only the very smallest, ill-grown, and unhealthy seed; they have no means of providing a change of seed, and the consequence is they do not, and cannot, have abundant or good crops.

There are, I may say, no manufactories or industries of any kind in the district; all the harbours along the coast are crowded with strangers and foreigners reaping a golden harvest of mackerel, but the poorer people have no means, and the richer no energy, to reap the benefit of this resource.

A very serious and growing evil is caused by many of the Boards of Guardians, as at present constituted, being unable to conduct the business of their unions in an efficient and business-like manner; violent and strenuous efforts have been made to put off the Boards moderate and sensible men, capable of conducting the business of the unions in a proper manner, and substituting men who are wholly incapable of doing so; these men will not resist the outside pressure, and hence one of the causes of the increase of out-door relief, and heavy burden of rates.

I have, &c.,

The Local Government Board, Dublin.

(signed) *George Spaight*.

REPORT from Dr. Brodie :—Part of his District situated in *West Cork*.

(No. 14,796—83—Miscellaneous.)

Gentlemen,

Cork, 22 April 1883.

I am in receipt of your letter, dated 19th instant, requesting a report from me as to the present state of certain unions in my district, situated in the West Riding of Cork, with such other information as to the general condition of the poor as I may think useful. I have now the honour to report as follows :—

The present state of my district, as I judge from personal observation and inquiry, is not unfavourable, the weather is now most propitious for farming operations, large breadth of land is being planted, and as far as I can see, every available hand is employed in the rural districts.

Little exceptional distress prevails, except along the sea board and other portions of Clonakilty Union, and in the remote western parts of the Macroom Union, where a scarcity of food may be found amongst the poor, but this appears to be the normal condition these two or three years.

There are reasonable facilities for obtaining employment through my district, the farming operations for the past two months being carried on actively, and the fine weather keeping all useful labour employed out of doors. Agricultural labourers can find easy employment at fair wages, except in the localities above named; in fact complaint is occasionally heard at Boards of Guardians of the difficulty of obtaining sufficient hands for agricultural purposes.

Between the demand for employment at home, and the continued emigration drain for America, very few, if any, of the labouring classes in my district seek employment either in England or Scotland. In view of the disturbed political condition of the public mind at present, none would think of seeking superior advantages if offered in these countries.

The resources of the poor are largely supplemented in towns by aid from charitable societies, chief among which I may mention "St. Vincent de Paul." Out-door relief also has been considerably extended amongst the rural population.

The physical condition of the people generally does not afford evidence of the prevalence of extreme distress amongst them.

To the Local Government Board,  
Dublin.

I have, &c.  
(signed) T. Brodie.

## RETURN of the Number of PERSONS in Receipt of IN-DOOR and OUT-DOOR RELIEF on

COUNTY.	UNION.	Number of Persons in Receipt of Relief on					
		18th March 1888.			17th March 1889.		
		In Workhouse.	Out-door.	TOTAL.	In Workhouse.	Out-door.	TOTAL.
DOWREGAL - - -	Ballynascree - - -	135	21	157	158	52	210
	Donaghy - - -	110	198	307	154	328	482
	Dowling - - -	38	-	38	38	-	38
	Glenties - - -	161	148	309	120	144	264
	Inchmonee - - -	161	540	701	557	340	897
	Lettistown - - -	180	1	181	131	1	132
	Milford - - -	119	5	124	109	5	114
	Shanahan - - -	99	5	104	100	5	105
	Shanahan - - -	99	5	104	100	5	105
CLARE - - -	Ballyvaughan - - -	303	188	491	313	245	558
	Carrigrohane - - -	357	224	581	325	352	677
	Ennis - - -	529	479	1,008	544	491	1,035
	Ennis - - -	509	355	864	514	360	874
	Ennis - - -	100	399	499	155	345	500
	Ennis - - -	303	1,022	1,325	350	1,028	1,378
	Ennis - - -	110	158	268	171	125	296
	Ennis - - -	895	-	895	899	5	904
	Ennis - - -	895	-	895	899	5	904
COKE, W. R. - - -	Bandon - - -	313	554	867	150	265	415
	Bantry - - -	124	55	179	115	62	177
	Carrigrohane - - -	184	64	248	168	73	241
	Chesley - - -	304	103	407	320	154	474
	Donnamore - - -	160	215	375	173	320	493
	Maroon - - -	287	460	747	277	490	767
	Millicent - - -	513	514	1,027	381	626	1,007
	Shanahan - - -	540	465	1,005	340	495	835
	Shanahan - - -	99	545	644	100	535	635
KERRY - - -	Cahirciveen - - -	100	284	384	108	545	653
	Cahirciveen - - -	200	5	205	212	3	215
	Cahirciveen - - -	136	364	500	134	300	434
	Cahirciveen - - -	468	1,017	1,485	422	1,045	1,467
	Cahirciveen - - -	165	822	987	150	800	950
	Cahirciveen - - -	664	744	1,408	661	740	1,401
	Cahirciveen - - -	240	270	510	207	114	321
	Cahirciveen - - -	355	204	559	165	264	429
	Cahirciveen - - -	490	450	940	460	450	910
GALWAY - - -	Glenties - - -	190	300	490	170	335	505
	Glenties - - -	247	130	377	220	130	350
	Glenties - - -	141	415	556	138	475	613
	Glenties - - -	115	31	146	114	58	172
	Glenties - - -	81	33	114	70	33	103
	Glenties - - -	139	56	195	120	114	234
	Glenties - - -	280	377	657	220	770	990
	Glenties - - -	287	310	597	280	310	590
	Glenties - - -	286	58	344	280	49	329
LINTHUM - - -	Carrick-on-Shannon - - -	287	310	597	280	310	590
	Carrick-on-Shannon - - -	286	58	344	280	49	329
	Carrick-on-Shannon - - -	284	58	342	280	49	329
	Carrick-on-Shannon - - -	216	160	376	201	168	369
	Carrick-on-Shannon - - -	248	111	359	240	109	349
	Carrick-on-Shannon - - -	241	96	337	215	158	373
	Carrick-on-Shannon - - -	115	303	418	107	322	429
	Carrick-on-Shannon - - -	174	244	418	173	244	417
	Carrick-on-Shannon - - -	200	338	538	184	341	525
MAYO - - -	Ennis - - -	109	24	133	113	30	143
	Ennis - - -	281	307	588	270	324	594
	Ennis - - -	102	0	102	103	4	107
	Ennis - - -	280	475	755	274	403	677
	Ennis - - -	286	475	761	279	480	759
	Ennis - - -	289	342	631	286	344	630
	Ennis - - -	247	519	766	238	517	755
	Ennis - - -	280	475	755	274	403	677
	Ennis - - -	286	475	761	279	480	759
ROSCOMMON - - -	Boyle - - -	280	475	755	274	403	677
	Boyle - - -	286	475	761	279	480	759
	Boyle - - -	289	342	631	286	344	630
	Boyle - - -	247	519	766	238	517	755
	Boyle - - -	280	475	755	274	403	677
	Boyle - - -	286	475	761	279	480	759
	Boyle - - -	289	342	631	286	344	630
	Boyle - - -	247	519	766	238	517	755
	Boyle - - -	280	475	755	274	403	677
SLIGO - - -	Droghda, West - - -	118	300	418	113	300	413
	Droghda - - -	371	730	1,101	300	747	1,047
	Droghda - - -	108	288	396	100	377	477
	Droghda - - -	118	300	418	113	300	413
	Droghda - - -	371	730	1,101	300	747	1,047
	Droghda - - -	108	288	396	100	377	477
	Droghda - - -	118	300	418	113	300	413
	Droghda - - -	371	730	1,101	300	747	1,047
	Droghda - - -	108	288	396	100	377	477
TOTALS - - -		13,189	17,305	30,494	12,084	17,511	29,595

each Saturday during the Six Weeks ended 14th April 1883, in the undermentioned Unions.

	Number of Persons in Receipt of Relief on											
	24th March 1883.			31st March 1883.			7th April 1883.			14th April 1883.		
	In Workhouse.	Out-door.	TOTAL.	In Workhouse.	Out-door.	TOTAL.	In Workhouse.	Out-door.	TOTAL.	In Workhouse.	Out-door.	TOTAL.
1	144	51	195	137	73	210	139	71	210	127	71	198
2	121	109	230	124	102	226	119	109	228	134	73	207
3	29	—	29	35	—	35	34	—	34	31	—	31
4	137	154	291	164	123	287	147	164	311	159	100	259
5	152	340	492	108	249	357	133	340	473	146	349	495
6	137	1	138	118	1	119	119	1	120	122	1	123
7	110	5	115	130	5	135	119	5	124	126	5	131
8	97	2	99	96	2	98	96	2	98	94	3	97
9	905	945	1,850	128	131	259	177	141	318	179	214	393
10	106	205	311	149	215	364	116	225	341	150	215	365
11	505	484	989	521	495	1,016	517	479	996	512	471	983
12	312	341	653	312	359	671	283	325	608	314	279	593
13	184	389	573	152	370	522	154	361	515	147	334	481
14	141	1,023	1,164	124	1,378	1,502	1,308	1,226	2,534	1,040	1,361	2,401
15	129	116	245	147	132	279	145	125	270	136	125	261
16	225	2	227	223	19	242	221	169	390	224	5	229
17	131	263	394	133	267	400	132	275	407	134	279	413
18	113	44	157	112	23	135	110	21	131	109	19	128
19	131	74	205	126	47	173	122	225	347	123	45	168
20	271	154	425	265	121	386	261	131	392	259	137	396
21	170	219	389	175	219	394	174	213	387	169	213	382
22	274	426	700	277	463	740	251	449	700	248	428	676
23	252	415	667	242	411	653	245	414	659	245	411	656
24	380	470	850	268	458	726	265	483	748	268	488	756
25	101	525	626	106	538	644	97	538	635	100	532	632
26	100	325	425	134	328	462	108	340	448	109	340	449
27	221	2	223	217	5	222	220	5	225	224	3	227
28	152	369	521	154	349	503	158	369	527	153	360	513
29	426	1,341	1,767	455	1,081	1,536	447	1,016	1,463	424	1,091	1,515
30	148	137	285	159	130	289	143	117	260	159	147	306
31	286	793	1,079	230	686	916	255	683	938	217	671	888
32	288	124	412	261	120	381	269	84	353	263	68	331
33	154	234	388	153	233	386	151	225	376	149	212	361
34	425	448	873	420	422	842	426	426	852	416	416	832
35	179	310	489	173	300	473	177	295	472	170	294	464
36	245	148	393	247	140	387	241	145	386	244	148	392
37	153	325	478	125	335	460	121	324	445	121	321	442
38	132	39	171	111	50	161	108	32	140	110	27	137
39	78	65	143	79	65	144	73	50	123	81	54	135
40	230	160	390	137	105	242	135	115	250	140	197	337
41	328	769	1,097	254	735	989	254	732	986	237	692	929
42	280	222	502	276	244	520	279	242	521	250	256	506
43	170	48	218	161	51	212	147	47	194	184	49	233
44	241	225	466	197	461	658	203	434	637	165	425	590
45	100	179	279	90	171	261	112	171	283	100	171	271
46	242	194	436	244	165	409	239	169	408	245	114	359
47	110	115	225	99	113	212	90	119	209	84	120	204
48	106	269	375	103	253	356	97	257	354	97	259	356
49	168	244	412	169	239	408	162	253	415	165	239	404
50	106	190	296	104	184	288	104	184	288	104	184	288
51	160	31	191	111	31	142	114	28	142	100	40	140
52	285	415	700	285	441	726	279	445	724	279	445	724
53	144	4	148	137	3	140	140	5	145	144	5	149
54	229	451	680	227	459	686	225	461	686	222	459	681
55	280	425	705	272	422	694	275	426	701	279	421	699
56	255	345	600	245	348	593	254	345	599	253	345	598
57	239	505	744	220	508	728	224	508	732	220	507	727
58	115	369	484	114	374	488	110	370	480	111	368	479
59	280	756	1,036	261	713	974	250	722	972	251	721	972
60	167	367	534	170	340	510	164	367	531	161	369	530
61	15,229	17,030	32,259	12,806	17,207	30,013	12,443	17,050	29,493	12,513	17,397	29,910

DISTRESS (IRELAND).

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COPIES of a Memoir from the Local Government Board for Ireland, dated the 22nd day of April 1883, with regard to Distresses existing or apprehended in certain Parts of Ireland; of the Memoirs from Inspectors of the Local Government Board; and, RETURN as to 18-rooms and Over-room Receipts enclosed therewith.

(*Mf. Yvel/yeu.*)

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*Ordered, by The House of Commons, in 18th Feb'y,*  
*27 April 1883.*

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[*Price 2 d.*]

145.

B-12, 1. 12

*Under 2 oz.*